

1 Introduction

In 1998, the Ford Foundation, Self-Help, Fannie Mae, and the UNC Center for Community Capital (the Center) formed a partnership, the Community Advantage Program (CAP), to demonstrate the feasibility of extending mortgage credit to low-income and minority households. Since 2003, and with the support of the Ford Foundation, the Center has gathered panel survey data from a subset of CAP mortgage recipients and from a group of matched renters in order to evaluate this program. The product of this data collection is the Community Advantage Panel Survey (CAPS).

The information collected by the survey has varied by survey year, with the exception of the Universal Core module, which has been administered each year to collect key demographic information. Aside from the Universal Core, the primary survey modules concern the social and financial impacts of home ownership, including mortgage details, neighborhood quality, social capital, financial literacy, wealth and asset accumulation, and changes in household spending patterns as a result of economic conditions.

This document provides a technical overview of the design of CAPS, as it pertains to the sample of matched renters.¹ This overview discusses sampling methods, selection criteria, and the construction of weights. In addition, it compares weighted summary statistics of key CAPS renter demographics with those from comparable subsets of the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the American Housing Survey (AHS). These comparisons put the experiences of the CAPS renters in context with respect to the national low-to-moderate income and minority population of renters in the US.

¹A separate document discusses the sample of owners and provides background on Self-Help's lending program.